

New York, New York

Approved For Release 2004/10/13 : CIA-RDP88-01315R000300220021-5

## The Inter-American Press Association

In San Diego, California, starting on Oct. 8, the Inter-American Press Association (IAPA) will hold its Annual General Assembly for 1965. This meeting, held under the presidency of the distinguished Peruvian publisher and statesman, Pedro G. Beltran, will mark yet another step forward for the international organization to which the free press of the Western Hemisphere owes an incalculable debt.

In the truest sense of the word, the IAPA is the press of the hemisphere, organized to speak with a strong, clear voice. Hitherto the IAPA has been fully occupied—and in scores of instances, successfully so—with the never-ending battle for the individual newspapers of the hemisphere to remain free. The IAPA has been additionally concerned with newspaper standards, which it is laboring to raise and keep high.

This now firmly established Western Hemisphere institution is advancing to a new role and new responsibilities. At San Diego the same interest of former years will attach to the not-yet-won battle for press freedom. But the IAPA, under the presidency of Dr. Beltran, now feels it is time to assume a new mission.

At the 1965 meeting it will for the first time make its General Assembly into a hemisphere forum where there will come up for discussion large and vital issues affecting the press but reaching beyond specific press problems to affect the general interests of the entire hemisphere.

Dr. Beltran has arranged a program calculated to spur the liveliest general debate, one that will no doubt carry over into the columns of the many newspapers represented in the IAPA. After the various speeches, members will be asked to express freely their ideas on the subjects discussed by the main speakers.

The subjects to be discussed could not be more timely. Mr. Roberto Campos, Brazil's Finance Minister, will speak about his efforts to rehabilitate Brazil's economy. Mr. Thomas C. Mann, Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, will speak on the political moment in the U.S.-Latin American affairs. Former U.S. Ambassador Ellis O. Briggs, a trenchant thinker on New World relations, will air his views. All of these statements are sure to be provocative in the best sense of the word.

The meeting will be saddened by the sudden death of Mexico's Dr. Ramon Beteta, himself a most original, trenchant and independent journalist. Dr. Beteta, whose life has been

closely intertwined with major events in Mexican-U.S. relations ever since the troubled oil controversy of the 1930's, will be sorely missed at the meeting and in hemisphere affairs.

Another high point of the San Diego program will be the admission to membership of more than forty-five additional newspapers. Today the English-speaking world is represented in the IAPA by 395 United States papers, by 22 in Canada and 8 in Trinidad-Tobago. With 303 Latin American members, the grand total at present is 728 including this one.

The latest development for the IAPA—Dr. Beltran's laudable move creating an important hemisphere forum at its Annual General Assembly—has been preceded by similar steps in growth over the years.

The IAPA traces its history back to 1926, but until a reorganization took place in 1950, it mainly represented governments and hence was not at all representative of the free press. A handful of U.S. and Latin American journalists that year cleansed and redirected the IAPA, and started it on its phenomenal growth.

In the past fourteen years, a strong Freedom of the Press Committee, under the chairmanship of the U.S. journalist, Jules Dubois, has rushed to aid literally scores of newspapers and newspapermen in the hemisphere who were suffering persecution of one kind or another from their governments. Lives have been saved and newspapers have been saved in this valiant and still-necessary crusade.

But the IAPA has gradually reached out to improve journalism's own performance. Prizes for excellence have been established. Since 1955 the IAPA Scholarship Fund has distributed at least ten scholarships annually to North American journalists for a year of study in Latin America and to Latin Americans for a year of study in the U.S. or Canada. In 1954, the Office of Certified Circulation was started to provide members with a tool to measure their circulation and improve their service to advertisers.

The IAPA Technical Center, at first solely IAPA-supported and now aided by major U.S. foundations as well, is devoted to supplying members with mechanical information and management techniques. Each year it holds important seminars for Latin American members.

Stronger. It is one of the hemisphere's brightest hopes for development and freedom.

Approved For Release 2004/10/13 : CIA-RDP88-01315R000300220021-5